



December 4, 2002

Marc P. Volavka
Executive Director
Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council
225 Market Street, Suite 400
Harrisburg, PA 17101

Dear Mr. Volavka,

We welcome the opportunity to comment and clarify an issue on Clearfield Hospital's performance in the 2001 Hospital Performance Report.

The report indicated Clearfield Hospital had a mortality rate higher than expected for one DRG, Congestive Heart Failure.

Analysis of the mortalities for this DRG noted the following:

- There were 15 mortalities for 189 included cases
- All 15 patients had "do not resuscitate" orders that limited us from providing aggressive life-saving treatments
- All 15 patients had underlying pre-existing conditions, which included Chronic Lung Disease, Peripheral Vascular Disease, Cancer, Diabetes, Renal Disease, and Cardiac Disease
- The average age of the 15 patients was greater than 85 years

Following mortality review of these 15 cases, it was determined that medical care was appropriately provided to all of these patients, and the mortality outcomes were not unexpected given the clinical presentation and co-morbidities of the patients. The information from the Performance Report will be utilized in our ongoing quality activities.

Clearfield Hospital supports the efforts of the Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council in providing quality patient care and promoting positive patient outcomes.

Respectfully submitted,



Kent C. Hess, CHE
President & CEO